

Message Text

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ACTION SS-15

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00
EB-08 SP-02 /041 W

-----170058Z 070691 /70

O 170010Z FEB 77ZFF4
FM USDEL SECRETARY IN JERUSALEM
TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTO 02015

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, IS, EG
SUBJECT: AMOCO DRILLING RIG IN GULF OF SUEZ

REF: SECTO 2004

1. FOLLOWING UP ON HABIB'S TALK WITH AVINERI (REFTEL), EVRON
RAISED WITH ATHERTON FEBRUARY 16 ISSUE OF AMOCO RIG'S THROWING
ANCHOR CHAINS EAST OF MEDIAN LINE. HE SAID ISRAELI POSITION
WAS THAT AMOCO WOULD HAVE TO RETRIEVE ITS ANCHOR
CHAINS AND SEEK APPROVAL OF ISRAELI AUTHORITIES FOR LAYING
THEM EAST OF MEDIAN LINE. HE HINTED THAT PLACEMENT OF ANCHOR
CHAINS WOULD BE ALLOWED, BUT ONLY AFTER AGREEMENT WITH GOI.

2. EVRON SAID TIMING OF THIS DEVELOPMENT RAISED SUSPICION THAT
AMOCO USING SECRETARY'S VISIT AS CAMOUFLAGE FOR
PLACING OF ANCHORS. EVRON POINTED TO (A) MARVIN KALB'S KNOWLEDGE
OF INCIDENT IN WASHINGTON BEFORE ISRAELI EMBASSY KNEW OF IT AND
LIKELIHOOD OF HIS BEING TTPED OFF BY COMPANY AND (B) AMOCO
KNOWLEDGE IT WOULD HAVE TO PLACE ANCHOR CHAINS EAST OF MEDIAN
LINE. EVRON STATED, HOWEVER, THAT ALTHOUGH RIG WAS NO PROBLEM
FOR GOI, AMOCO SHOULD HAVE TOLD U.S. AND GOI OF ITS INTENTIONS.
ISRAEL DOES NOT WANT TO HAVE AN INCIDENT OVER THIS AFFAIR BUT
AT SAME TIME MUST PROTECT ITS POSITION ON ACTIVITIES EAST OF
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MEDIAN LINE.

3. ATHERTON AGREED EVERY EFFORT SHOULD BE MADE TO AVOID AN
INCIDENT URGED THAT ISRAEL TAKE NO PRECIPITATE ACTION. EVRON
SAID THAT ISRAEL WOULD NOT ACT PRECIPITATIVELY AND THAT HE WOULD
CONTACT ISRAELI MILITARY TO THIS END. ATHERTON SAID THAT WE DID
NOT BELIEVE AMOCO TIMING WAS RELATED TO SECRETARY'S TRIP; AMOCO

HAD INFORMED EMBASSY CAIRO SOME TIME AGO OF PLANS TO MOVE RIG TO THIS LOCATION AS PART OF ITS PROJECTED DRILLING PROGRAMS. ATHERTON SAID HE HOPED ISRAEL WOULD NOT INSIST ON REMOVAL OF ANCHOR CHAINS SO THAT AMOCO COULD GET ON WITH ITS DRILLING SINCE RIG WAS, AFTER ALL, WEST OF LINE. EVRON SAID THIS MIGHT BE POSSIBLE BUT ONLY IF ISRAEL'S PERMISSION WAS REQUESTED. ATHERTON RESPONDED THAT WE WOULD SEEK MORE DETAILS FROM AMOCO AND BE BACK TO ISRAELIS IN THIS MATTER.

4. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO CONTACT AMOCO AND SEEK DETAILS OF ITS PLANS AS BASIS FOR OUR FURTHER APPROACH TO ISRAELIS: HOW MANY CHAINS MUST BE EXTENDED EAST OF MEDIAN LINE, HOW LONG WILL THEY BE IN PLACE, AND ANY FURTHER RELEVANT DETAILS. WITH THIS INFORMATION IN HAND, WE WILL MAKE FIRM EFFORT WITH ISRAELIS TO PERMIT THIS OPERATION TO CONTINUE ON UNINTERRUPTED. VANCE

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